We claim:

1   1. A multi-staged services policer comprising:

2   a downstream services policer; and

3   an upstream services policer adapted to:

4   receive a traffic unit;

5   analyze said traffic unit;

6   based on said analysis, transmit said traffic unit to said downstream
7   services policer; and

8   receive feedback from said downstream services policer.

1   2. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein said feedback from said
2   downstream services policer is an indication of available bandwidth.

1   3. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein said traffic unit is a first
2   traffic unit and said upstream services policer is further adapted to:

3   receive a second traffic unit;

4   analyze said second traffic unit in light of said feedback; and

5   based on said analysis, transmit said traffic unit to said downstream services
6   policer.

1   4. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein at least one of said services
2   policers polices at an application layer granularity.

1   5. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein at least one of said services
2   policers polices at a data link layer granularity.

1   6. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein said traffic unit is an
2   Asynchronous Transfer Mode cell.

1 7. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein said traffic unit is a Frame
2 Relay frame.

1 8. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 wherein said traffic unit is a Internet
2 protocol packet.

1 9. The multi-staged services policer of claim 1 where said upstream services policer
2 is a first upstream services policer and said multi-staged services policer further
3 comprises a second upstream services policer adapted to transmit traffic units
4 received at said second upstream services policer to said downstream services
5 policer based on an analysis specific to said second upstream services policer and
6 wherein said downstream services policer affords a higher priority to traffic units
7 received from said second upstream services policer than to traffic units received
8 from said first upstream services policer.

1 10.A method of handling traffic units comprising:

2   receiving a traffic unit;

3   analyzing said traffic unit;

4   based on said analysis, transmitting said traffic unit to a downstream services
5   policer; and

6   receiving feedback from said downstream services policer.

1 11.The method of claim 10 wherein said traffic unit is a first traffic unit and said
2 method further comprises:

3   receiving a second traffic unit;

4   analyzing said second traffic unit in light of said feedback; and

5   based on said analysis, transmitting said traffic unit to said downstream
6   services policer.

1   12.A computer readable medium containing computer-executable instructions which,

2   when performed by processor in an upstream services policer that is upstream of a

3   downstream services policer, cause the processor to:

4   receive a traffic unit;

5   analyze said traffic unit;

6   based on said analysis, transmit said traffic unit to said downstream services

7   policer; and

8   receive feedback from said downstream services policer.

1   13.A multi-staged services policer comprising:

2   a downstream services policer; and

3   an upstream services policer adapted to:

4   receive a traffic unit;

5   analyze said traffic unit;

6   based on said analysis, amend said traffic unit resulting in an amended

7   traffic unit including an amendment, where said amendment may be

8   interpreted by said downstream services policer; and

9   transmit said amended traffic unit to said downstream services policer.

1   14.A multi-staged services policer comprising:

2   a first services policer;

3   a second services policer; and

4   a third services policer receiving output from each of said first services policer

5   and said second services policer.